

## **Code of Discipline & Anti Bullying Policy**

### **School Discipline**

The Board of management has ultimate responsibility for discipline in the school under its management and a duty to ensure that a fair Code of Discipline applies therein. This code should be formulated by the Principal and teaching staff in consultation with parents and be approved by the Board.

Rule 130 of the Rules for National Schools  
(as amended by Circular 7 / 88)

### **Catholic School Ethos and Aims of Code of Discipline**

The following is a Code of Behaviour of Knock N.S. (Roll No. 17695J)  
It was devised by the Principal and staff in consultation with the Board of Management and Parents' representatives.

The Catholic ethos of this school is to establish and maintain high standards of behaviour. This points to the importance of a strong sense of community within the school and the existence of a high level of co-operation among Teachers, ancillary staff, pupils, parents, parents' association and the Board of Management. The school places a great emphasis on the need to give the children every possible opportunity to develop patterns of good behaviour. The aim is to ensure that the individuality of each child is accommodated, while at the same time acknowledging the right of each child to education in a disruption free environment.

### **Aims of Code of Discipline**

The Code of Discipline aims to achieve three things:

- a. The efficient operation of the school and the structuring of in-class discipline so that there exists an efficient and stimulating learning environment.
- b. The maintenance of good order throughout the school and respect for the school environment.
- c. The development of self-discipline in pupils based on consideration, respect and tolerance for others.

### **Principles of Discipline Policy:**

If the school is to achieve a happy, secure environment in which children can develop their full potential it is necessary to provide a framework which promotes constructive behaviour and discourages unacceptable behaviour. The school code places a greater emphasis on rewards than on sanctions and the ideal is that pupils will acquire the skills of self-discipline. There are times however when it may be necessary to impose

sanctions in order to maintain good order and to discourage offenders. The school recognises the variety of differences, which exist between children and the need to accommodate these differences. School rules are kept to a minimum and are devised with regard for the health, safety and welfare of all members of the school community.

Rules are kept clear and simple eg.

- Listen to others
- Keep your desk and area organized
- Respect every single person in the school.

### **General School Rules:**

If a school is to function efficiently it is necessary that rules and regulations are clearly stated and enforced consistently and wisely.

1. **Respect and Courtesy:** All pupils are expected to treat staff, their fellow pupils and visitors with respect and courtesy at all times. The use of foul language and any form of bullying is unacceptable. Truthfulness and honesty are expected from the children at all times.
2. **Punctuality:** The official opening time is 9.20 am. Junior & Senior infants finish at 2pm. Classes for the older pupils end at 3.00pm. No responsibility is accepted for the pupils outside of these hours.
3. **Absences:** Every absence of a child must be accounted for verbally or in written form by a parent/guardian. It may be written in parents section of Homework Diary. If a child wishes to leave school early a written note must be given to the class teacher. Messages by phone should only be made in cases of emergency.
4. **Mobile phones** are not necessary in our school. Emergency calls may be made using the school phone. If a child brings in a mobile it will be confiscated and returned at home time.
5. **Illness:** Any infectious illness should be notified to the school immediately.
6. **Personal Property:** Children should have their names on their uniforms and other personal property such as school books, copies and lunch boxes.
7. **School Property and School Environment:** Pupils must respect all school property and keep the school environment clean and litter free. Defacing school property is a serious misdemeanour. Damage caused by pupils to such shall be replaced / paid for by their parents.
8. A policy of **healthy eating** is promoted by the school. A balanced lunch is recommended.

**# Eating / chewing gum is forbidden.**

**# No glass bottles are allowed.**

**# In the interest of the environment, re-usable containers are suggested.**

#### **Behaviour in Class:**

1. Pupils must have all books and required materials.
2. Pupils are expected to work to, the best of their ability and to present written exercises neatly.
3. Pupils are to show respect for their classmates and to follow their teacher's instructions.
4. Any behaviour that interferes with the rights of others, with the smooth running of the class and affects the work of the class is unacceptable.

#### **Behaviour Out Of Class:**

1. Pupils must not behave in any way, which endangers themselves and others.
2. Any instructions or directions given by the supervising teacher/adults are to be complied with.
3. Climbing on walls, wire fences, etc. is forbidden – also cycling within the school premises is not allowed.
4. Children must enter and leave school buildings in an orderly manner at all times.
5. Any form of threatening behaviour is unacceptable. If children are being bullied, teachers must be told, so that the matter can be dealt with effectively.
6. On wet days all pupils are to remain in their own classrooms, sitting, reading, colouring, playing board games.  
No running in classrooms and hallways.
7. Middle and Senior classes must give due regard to younger children while in and /or playing in the school grounds.

**Homework:**

1. It is the policy of the school to assign homework on a regular basis. Homework assignments may vary from pupil to pupil depending on curriculum and aptitude of pupil.
2. Parents are strongly encouraged to take an active interest in their child's homework. If homework causes worry for the pupil parents are asked to contact the teacher.  
In senior classes any homework not done must be completed during break the following day.
3. Parents should sign homework journal on completion each night and inform teacher if there are any problems or issues with homework.

**Rewards for Good Behaviour.**

1. These vary according to the age of the children and the class teacher's system.

**Oral and written praise.**

2. Pupil's journal or copy is used to convey messages of approval. Yearly reports will be made on each pupil.
3. Homework off as appropriate.
4. Extra privileges will be given to promote good behaviour.
5. Prizes for merit.
6. Good behaviour must be seen to be rewarded.

**Categories of Misconduct.****Misdemeanour**

1. Talking in class
2. Messing in class
3. Not paying attention
4. Eating during class time
5. Homework not done without good reason
6. Leaving school yard (without permission)
7. Disobedience
8. Not doing class work

### **Serious Misbehaviour**

1. Continuous talking in class
2. Continuous messing in class
3. Eating in class after recent warning
4. Repeatedly not doing homework
5. Repeated disobedience
6. Not doing class work after warning
7. Blatant bad manners
8. Disrespect
9. Fighting
10. Bullying
11. Defiance
12. Answering back
13. Insolence
14. Theft
15. Deliberate lies
16. Bad language

### **Gross Misbehaviour.**

1. Bad language to staff
2. Questioning of teacher's authority, decisions
3. Repeated or serious theft
4. Serious disrespect
5. Serious insolence
6. Deliberate damage to property
7. Continuous bullying
8. Deliberate injury to another pupil
9. Threat to staff member / pupil
10. Deliberate injury to staff member
11. Deliberate lies against other pupils' /staffs' character's

### **Strategies and Consequences of Poor Behaviour and suggested sanctions.**

1. Reasoning with pupil.
2. Verbal reprimand (including advice on how to improve).
3. Temporary separation from peers, friends and others. (may be sent to another classroom)
4. Loss of privileges. eg. Drama, Art, P.E. etc
5. Detention during breaks with work to complete
6. Prescribing extra work to be completed at home and signed by parents.

Informal note to parents, informing them of misconduct, and inviting them to discuss the issue with class teacher.

7. Referral to Principal.

8. Children may be asked to write an account of the incident, giving both sides of the story and an apology. This is also to be signed by parents.

9. Behaviour record is kept by each teacher.

- Pupil is warned at being put on written report.

The record notes the following:

- Incidents of poor behaviour
- Record of improvement
- Record of discussion with parents and date agreed to follow
- Sanctions/consequences used. This may take the form of a notebook to be sent home each week and returned to the school. Signed by parents with comment where appropriate.

#### 10. **Communication with parents:**

- a) When there are a number of serious misdemeanours a note is sent to parents by the Principal, to be signed and returned.
- b) The parents are invited to school to discuss the issue and help deal with their child's behaviour.

#### 11. **Suspension:**

- a) Teachers shall keep a written record of all serious misbehaviours as well as a record of improvement in the behaviour of disruptive pupil.
- b) **Where there are repeated instances of serious misbehaviour including bullying, the Chairperson of the Board of Management will be informed and the parents will be requested in writing to attend a meeting with Chairperson and the Principal or a selected member of the Board of Management.**

- c) If the parents do not give an undertaking that the child will behave in an acceptable manner in the future the pupil may have to be suspended. If the parents fail to attend the meeting or fail to provide a reasonable excuse for not doing so the child **may be suspended** until they do so.
- N.B. d) The Board of Management makes provision in the code of discipline to deal with continuously disruptive pupils or with a serious breach of discipline **by authorising the Chairperson or Principal to exclude a pupil or pupils from school. The maximum initial period of such exclusion shall be three school days.**

A special decision of the Board of Management is necessary to authorise a further period of exclusion up to a maximum of 10 school days to allow for consultation with the pupil and pupil's parents or guardians. In exceptional circumstances the Board of Management may authorise a further period of exclusion in order to enable the matter to be reviewed.

- e) When a period of suspension is over the pupil should be re-admitted formally to the class by the Principal.

**Note 1:** In the implementation of these sanctions it will be made clear to the child that it is the behaviour that is being rejected not the child.

**Note 2:** In line with the schools' policy on dealing with bullying, all acts of bullying, aggressive or threatening behaviour towards pupils or teachers shall be considered a **major breach of discipline.**

**Note 3:** The steps outlined above may be **by-passed** at the discretion of the class teacher in consultation with the principal should they **consider an incident serious enough to merit it.**

### **Role of parents:**

The code of Discipline will not work without the support and co-operation of parents. If teachers are not working in harmony, the pupils will inevitably suffer. Parents will be informed at an early stage if problems occur and not simply at the point where possible suspensions are involved. Parents are invited to keep in close contact with the school with regard to all aspects of the child's progress.

### **Review of Code:**

A copy of this code is available to all parents. It is a condition of attendance at this school that pupils abide by the rules and regulations in this Code of Discipline. The code has been drawn up after a process, which involved consultation with every teacher in the school, parents and the Board of Management. It will be reviewed at regular intervals.

## **Anti-Bullying Policy**

### **Definition and Description**

**“Bullying can be defined as repeated aggression, verbal, psychological or physical, conducted by an individual or group against others” (Department of Education, 1993)**

### **Bullying Behaviour can be categorised as follows:**

- Physical bullying: Constant hitting, jostling, pushing around; it may also take the form of severe physical assault.
- Verbal Bullying: Persistent derogatory remarks about a child's appearance, clothing, school work, family circumstances, ability at games etc.
- Constant interference with another child's possessions, books lunch money or clothes.
- Deliberate exclusion or isolation of one child by some or all of the class group. It may be accompanied by writing insulting remarks about the victim, or passing around notes about or drawing of the victim.

### **Possible signs of Bullying**

- Unexplained symptoms of illness
- Unexplained bruises, scratches, cuts
- Fear of going to school
- Fear of going home or out into the yard
- Deteriorating school performance
- Unusually anxious, nervous or tense in school
- Evasiveness when questioned by a teacher about incidents
- Becoming isolated in the class
- Regular interference with books or possessions
- Constantly asking for or stealing money (to pay a bully)
- Aggressive behaviour
- Loss of confidence



### **Awareness Within the School**

- Creating a school climate which encourages children to report bullying
- Raising awareness of bullying through programmes like Stay Safe, Alive –O and Be Safe Garda programme, Prim Ed – R.S.E. S.P.H.E.
- Providing comprehensive supervision of pupils at all school activities
- Developing clear procedures for reporting and investigating bullying
- Providing a supportive environment for those affected by bullying behaviour
- Liaising with relevant agencies in the local community, including N.E.P.S. H.S.E. Public Health Nurse, Gardaí etc.
- Circle Time

### **Helping Children Who Have Been Bullied**

- Teach children identify, cope and prevent strategies.
- Have children define bullying. What is bullying? How does it make them feel.?
- Examine the victim's behaviour. Is there something in the child's demeanour that attracts the bullying?
- Teach children to say "No" in an assertive tone of voice and to carry themselves in a confident way.
- Establish a sense of equality within the group i.e. the same entitlement to space opinions, their own possessions, etc.
- Get other children to help – get older children to act as mentors to younger children
- Alert parents
- Let children know that they did the right thing by telling and that it is not their fault if they are being bullied.
- Keep an account of incidents
- Stay Safe lessons / Prim Ed – Bullying Programme

## **Resources:**

- School mission & Ethos statement
- Alive – O
- Prim Ed Bullying Programme
- Stay Safe Programme
- INTO guidelines on countering bullying behaviour
- Department of Education circular M42 / 93
- Organisations as listed in “Support Services”

## **Suggested Sanctions:**

### **Procedure for noting and reporting an incident of bullying behaviour.**

- Reports of bullying will be assessed by class teacher/resource teacher/ principal.
  - Serious cases will be immediately referred to principal and parents will be informed
  - Non – teaching staff will be encouraged to report any incidents to the teaching staff (S.N.A. Secretary)
  - In the case of a complaint regarding a staff member this should normally be raised with the staff member in question (Ref: Complaints Procedure)
  - Note: Child’s age must be taken into consideration.
1. Teachers take a calm, unemotional problem – solving approach and try to deal quickly, firmly and fairly.
  2. Incidents will be investigated both within and outside the classroom situation as appropriate.
  3. Teacher will speak to pupils involved in an attempt to get both sides of the story. This may also involve pupils who are not directly involved.
  4. Questions will determine what, where, who, why and when.
  5. If a group is involved each member will be interviewed where practicable.
  6. If it is concluded the child has engaged in bullying behaviour it will be made clear to him / her how he / she is in breach of Code of Discipline.
  7. Teachers who are investigating cases will keep a written record (See incident report sheet). Those involved may also be asked to write their own account of the incident.
  8. Where it has been determined that bullying behaviour has taken place, parents or guardians of the children involved will be informed.
    - Refer to the school policy
    - Suggest ways in which they can reinforce and support the actions taken by the school.
  9. Follow up meetings / correspondence should be agreed, to review progress.
  10. Where necessary the principal may contact agencies to seek advice regarding behaviour strategies / anger management etc.
  11. For serious incidents the child may be suspended (see under code of discipline)